

?Soldiering On?, Dufferin County veteran publishes fourth book



Written By **MARNI WALSH**

Merv Parker says he has had ?an amazing life journey,? and despite a devastating cancer diagnosis, the local veteran is determined to ?soldier on.?

He is staying focused on what he loves and has just published his fourth book, *Anxious to Serve*. The book is a tribute to his father, ?based on his extraordinary life journey, including his wartime service in WWI.?

The youngest of three children, Merv Parker was born in 1942 in Middleton Nova Scotia, in a rural farming community. Upon graduation from high school, at age 18, Merv was recruited by the town's police chief to serve as his replacement during a one month holiday.

After one month's training by the chief, Merv became the town cop. He went on to become the first campus Police Chief of Acadia University in Wolfville, N.S. In his previous book, *Chief Constable*, Merv writes a tribute to the men and women who served on Middleton police force from 1910-2000. *Chief Constable* is available on the reserve shelf of the Shelburne Library.

From 1964-67, Mr. Parker spent time as a surveyor building a railway line from Peace River to Hay River in the North West Territories, before returning to Acadia University and completing degrees in History and Education.

Influenced by his policing experiences, after graduation, he enlisted in the RCAF Security Police Branch where he was awarded a permanent commission. Two years later, he met his wife Beverly when serving as an instructor at the Military Police Academy at CFB Borden.

?After two dates in two years, I proposed and was accepted by Beverly and her three children, who I adopted. We were married in 1970 when I was given my first posting commanding the 75-man police security force at the Bomarc nuclear missile base at Lamacaza, 100 miles north of Montreal,? he said.

Merv went on to serve a total of 14 years in the Military Police with assignments in CFB Borden, Quebec, Ottawa, Vietnam, and Germany. He and Beverly arrived in Dufferin County in 1987, when two years previously, Merv was hired as Superintendent of Security for Pearson International Airport after the Air India bombing off the coast of England.

Merv retired from public service in 1997, but was soon asked to teach aviation security at Georgian College in Barrie. Even in retirement, Merv remained professionally active as a volunteer advisor for the Canadian Executive Services Organization.

He completed assignments as a security advisor in several parts of the world, including Bolivia, Russia, Armenia, United Arab Emirates, and Jamaica. In 2002, Merv was presented with the Queen's Jubilee Medal, in recognition of his outstanding professional and volunteer service to his community and country.

Merv says his newest book release, *Anxious to Serve*, is the story of ?a young man's determination to serve his family and country in peacetime and war.? He told the Free Press, the historical fiction is based on the life and adventures of his father, Claude Edwin Parker (1891-1968) as related to him. Claude, or ?Eddie', was both ?anxious and willing to serve,' whether at home doing family farm chores, venturing to the unknown Canadian prairies in response to the national call for harvesters, or his volunteer enlistment in the Canadian army for overseas service during WWI.?

?Like my father, I too felt a desire to serve and found my niche in law enforcement,? says Merv Parker. ?I have worked or visited six of the seven continents?I didn't need to visit Antarctica, but I have been to the North Pole to conduct a police investigation at our military base at Alert.?

Now, Merv is staying focused on personal goals, which will include a fifth book, humorously entitled, ?When the Wheels Came off my Wagon'. He is also looking forward to family events, including ?a cruise through the Panama Canal, in June 2020, with my loving and supportive wife, Beverly, to mark our 50th wedding anniversary.?

Merv Parker's book *Anxious to Serve* is now available at the Shelburne Public Library at a cost of \$15. Mr. Parker says three dollars from every book sold will be donated to the Shelburne Library fund.